FASHION IN GIVING

Correct But Queer Things for Christmas Gifts.

BREWERIES AND MODEL GUNS

Betting Books and Stilettos for Women-- How Hard Times Affect Christmas Plans.

What may be termed the Christmas on is at present observable. meetion with nearly every article rehanding offered for sain. That is, things which in themselves have a perennial rather than a contemporateone utility, such as shoes and stores, are advertised complemently as appro-priate Christmas presents. So familiar has this form of enterprise become, with the annual recurrence of the feast of feasts, that wonder is felt whenever it does not assert itself, and the ice man seems a thriftless creature just now for not crying the utility of his wares as a holiday gift.

There is also, the other extreme. Objects which seem almost to proclaim



their atter uselessness, from either the pronountal or the utilitarian standpoint and which, if ordinarily purchased, might figure as exhibits in evidence before a commission de lunatico inquirendo, become good investments about the time Santa Claus is due.

Hence the three grand divisions of Christmas presents into first, those which are useful without being appropriate; secondly, those which are appropriate without being useful, and thirdly, those which are neither useful nor appropriate. A theory has been advanced in recent years having a combination of utility with appropriatenesa in Christmas presents for its foundation. The exponents of this theory, however, are deemed superficial thinkers by the influer tial majurity of the gift-giving classes, as the panelty of their adherents shows.

For, beginning with the presents most numerously bestowed at Christmas, namely toys, it seems that the good old hobby horse and relocipeds have gone out of fashion.

Toy breweries are the most popular things this season," declared a leading



merchant in the plaything line, reviewing the holiday sales. "Seems sur-prising, doesn't it? Make good imitation beer, too. Can't make genuine on account of the license law. Every toy browery we sell is fitted up with pumps, wats and cooling apparatus and is operated by steam. Other popular things tale year are toy laundries, toy prisons, toy Brazils and toy dynamite

Eastle. "What's a toy Brazil?" "It's played by boys on a small pond or tub of water. There is an clevation of the South American continent which is made fast. Then miniature men of war cruise about and exchange

There was a model of the affair in the shop with Mello and Brazilians galore. Near it was the toy dynamite gun. The latter is operated with a high explosive. The douter said he had already sold a number of presents as Christmas gafus for boys entering their

Cariosities in presents for grown people are most abundant perhaps at the jawelers'. A young buty was buying a piper cleaner. Blse paid twenty fre-An Chies, Cor It.

That was unumally expensive," admitted that first when the had gone. 'An ordinary one would cost a tenth of the price. But some women have aurious idea shout smoking articles. A wife retont by ordered a ten dollar pasted eight ofterofus. We will many



PARISE POOL elements helders that cost as much. It is nearly always women who buy them, A good eigaratte holder should cost us

more than free dellars." . . The presents made by young women to given men do not, this year, insinds worth. It is admitted now to he had from for girls happenedd Artis that of the Things Which an English elex of woming apparel, or even umbroiles and canes, to those of the opposite see other than some relatives. This is believed to be one reason for | for an Englishman to understand our the rashito jurely. The miss who would bestow a gift this year upon an elderly beother indom or agod mode may not with propriety present even has not been thought highly of for an nistreella. For a truther or a far gentlemen. Politics, the church, the ther the case is different.

The prong men do not find theme selves particularly restricted except. that it is doesnot but taste to present a young woman with a watch unless she is either a relative or a finner, or in mourning Curiously enough, women to meereing are new permitted to re- paratically speaking. cutes all sirts of presents from men,

cindes all thoughts of a sentimental sharacter in connection with the gift. The innovation is due to the duchess

Riving whips are the newest things as presents to young women. They are seen with English holly sticks, silver and gold mounted. Needless to say, there is no limit to the price. A curione fancy, too, is the prevailing one of giving stilettes to unmarried girts. They are, in many cases, superbob-jects, jeweled and golden, sharp and deadly. They are allowed to repose upon the bondoir table. The fad started in France and was at first objected to, as leading to indulgence of the suicidal mania among over-sensitive mattern. Therespon statistics were consulted and it transpired that girls of from sixteen to twenty-six rarely stab themselves. They end their lives, when so inclined, by means of poison. So the stiletto as a present at Christmas time to young women has

grown in favor.

Betting books as gifts to women from mon are also popular, extraordinary as it may seem," said a New York merchant, in this connection. "A few years ago such a present would have been almost an insuit. The artigles come in amorted leathers, with allver and gold mountings. They cost from three to sixty dollars, and sell

readily." It may be stated that good taste is outraged at the presentation to a woman, relative or not, by a man of such things as manieure sets, toothpicks or toilette articles with but few exceptions. Such gifts imply an Impression on the part of the donor that the recip-



MECHANICAL SINGING BIRD

ient is in need of the things. One present of this kind, as is an open secret now, nearly led to a duel in France not

ong ago.
What young women may give to young men has always been a difficult matter to decide. In the case of brother or cousin the subject is not very complicated. When the friends of brothers or cousins are considered the troubles arise. As has been the rule heretofore, such presents seem to be given this year only under exceptional circumstances. An engagement is one of them. There are, of course, our old friends, the stud, the watch, the gold peucil. There seems a singular lack of anything new this year in this

In what may be called the generality of Christmas gifts is the mechanical bird. The thing has grown phenoraenally popular. It is merely an imitation bird in a cage which is wound up—the bird, not the cage—and sings like a canary. The effect is very realistic and as gifts to invalids they take first prize. For the mechanical bird can be no outlay for food.

Firearms as presents are curiously in favor. There are exhibited revolvers and pistols, with "Merry Christmas" and "Good will to men" incongruously lettered on their metal hilts.

For young married couples are children's "food pushers" and baby "jumpers," highly complex mechanisms, it must be acknowledged. Needle thread ers come in new designs this year, and for country relatives the new snow aboe, famed as Peary's favorite, seems more or less appropriate.

A curious conflict between the eti-

quette book and the counting house is embodied in the bread fork. The latter article is a complex affair, gold and silver, retailed at fancy prices and presumably, therefore, purchased mostly by the wealthy. Yet we are assured that the use of a fork to bread in any way is now conceded to be vuigar. A noted ex-consul general to London tells us that the prince of Wales will not even have his lonves cut with the ald of a fork by his own cooks in his own hitchen. It is as easy for them to ! keep their hands clean as it is to keep a fork elean, and they are as likely to do one as the other. The story of how the parliamentary laborite was sneered at for taking a piece of bread from a plate with a jab of his fork is also familliar. Yet here we have the "bread fork," widely advertised as a Christmas gift. It comes high, too, fifty dolhars being no unusual price. Are they purchased as a present for the cook, that she may use them in tousting the beensil?

Fencing swords and outfits are among the most popular presents from women to women. Parlor pool and billiards are among the contrivances in which the whole family may be expented to have a proprietary interest. The outfits are inexpensive and dura-

The bad times seem to have passed away, if the Christmas trade be any indication. The volume of business in some lines has also exceeded that of

pravims years. "A noteworthy thing, too," declared one merchant, "is the unusually large number of people this year who pay eash for gifts. As a rule we sell hearlly to cradit customers who settle after the holklays. But this senson there arems to be a surpassing pinitude of ready money. Father Christman serms to have killed the hard times."

AMERICAN BUSINESS LIFE.

Gentleman Cannot Understand, This business life of American gentinmon is one of the hardest problems metly, says the Mineteenth Century Till comparatively lately in England commercial business, except banking. army and mary, the har, etc., have been the entiets for English younger some. In America is to quite different. Among the many renouns for this I will mestion but the one important one, that the purcella above mentioned afford but few openings, con-

The shurch is a poorly-paid profesthe like being that their weren are don for the pone of the wealthr mer-

chaots, and the army and mavy are so small in number that they do not afford a field for more than a few. The bar is, of course, open, and is crowded in America as in England. Politics, for some inscrutable reason, does not seem to attract many of the higher grades of youth. Consequently, the young American seeks the commercial field, and in every American city, especially in the west, one finds at the head of cultivation and progress men head of cultivation and progress men whose rise has been due to successful commercial enterprise. It is well for the individual that success should be so rewarded, and it is well for the community, also, that the man of business, who has gained his success on legitimate lines, should be its leader. In a new and partly unsettled country like America, so fortunately situated as to need practically no foreign palicy, and to fear no foreign enemies, the creator or the distributor of wealth is a far more valuable man than the solitician on the solitics. politician or the soldier.

The sanguineness of the American is another feature especially striking to an outsider. The whole temper of the people is one of hope. No young man enters life in any line without the fullest belief that he is going to suc-eced, and going to make a great deal of money, and do it all very quickly. This may be true of young men every-where, but it is especially so in the states. And men are justified in their youthful hopes.

Practically any young man of rea-sonable brains and industry is sure to succeed. Openings are numerous, and the sharp witted American is quick to take advantage of them. It is a curious faut, but one that I have often heard employers of unskilled labor comment upon, that none of their workmen were American born, unless, possibly, some of the foremen. As an Englishman, I am glad to add that rarely are Englishmen either found as unskilled laborers in American workshops.

THE ART OF EATING.

A Branch of Education in Which Americans Are Worfully Deficient. "When my children get to the proper age," said the man who was smoking a briar eye, "I intend to have them taken in hand by some competent per-

in the art of eating, and, further, in the science of finding out what to eat and ordering." "What do you mean?" inquired the

man who sat next to him. "I mean this: The average American citizen is woefully deficient in knowledge of what he can get to cat. He falls down when it comes to ordering a dinner. The Sreat majority of people in this country are brought up frugally at home and do not know anything but the commonest dishes. The consequence is that when a man goes into a restaurant for dinner or to a hotel he gazes helplessly at the bill of fare and sees many things of which he does not know the component parts. He dares not order anything that he is not sure of, for fear of ridicule, and he falls back on roast beef and mashed potatoes. The fact is, he doesn't know anything but roast beef. Same way in a restaurant. When a waiter shoves a bill of fare under a man's nose nine times out of ten he will look it over and then say: 'Gimme a steak and some fried potatoes.' Now, the man who does this day a fter day doesn't want roast beef. He is sick unto death of steaks and fried potatoes. He loathes ham and eggs, and yet he ke on ordering them in dreary and dyspeptic succession, because he doesn't know any better and he is too pround to confess his ignorance. It's that way with me, and I'll bet it's that way with most of you. I am going to relieve my children of all these things. They're going to know what's what when it comes to eating. 'No roast-beef domination! shall be my household slogan." And the rest of the party, says the Buffulo Express, thought it over and concluded that he was pretty nearly

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Proposet. Larne E. Foreins. Joyley of Probate. In the matter of the saintent.

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It is embrand that Monday, the 1th day of Do-yman, 1904 at 10 orlock in the forecome at an and products office, be appointed for the ex-amination and allowages of east account and large grand to title.

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